well, for detecting aircraft, it -could show the angle of elevation necessary for training the anti aircraft guns. Various models of this technology were developed, and it logically fell to the Wireless Mechanic to instal and to maintain it. The title RDF was soon changed to that of RADAR, an acronym of Radio Direction and Ranging. As the title Wireless Mechanic was then no longer completely descriptive, the maintainers' title was changed to Radio Mechanic. The Radio Mechanic then became responsible for the satisfactory performance of all electronic equipment in his ship. This was quite a responsible task. This change occurred in 1943 (CNO 414/43 refers).

In a history such as this, technical references are essential**.** However, the thrust and focus of the book is on the people. It is a record of what life was like for those men, most of whom, upon joining the RAN, had not the faintest idea of what the word Radar meant, nor how radio communication occurred, yet within the space of 12 months intensive training, had the responsibility of keeping all of a warship's radar and communication equipment fully functional.

Typically, the recruits were in their early 20s, and had secondary school education to year 5 level. Good passes in mathematics and physics were preferred. There were exceptions such as an older recruit with a strong background in radio.

Following the mandatory medical examinations and probity checks, the new recruits spent their first six weeks in the Navy "square bashing" at HMAS Cerberus. Cerberus is a large Naval training establishment at Crib Point Victoria. Those six weeks instilled a sense of discipline in each recruit, and taught him some of the basics of Navy life. The recruit learnt how to wear and to look after his uniform correctly, how to carry out the various drill orders, and generally to understand the subtleties of Naval routine. The facetious homily of "If it moves, salute it; if it is stationary then polish it; but if it wont take polish, then paint it" was not too far from reality.

All RAN recruits had this initial indoctrination which was then followed by specialist training at the various schools within Cerberus. For example, the Telegraphists went to the Signal
School, the Stokers went to the Engineering School and so on. However, the Radio Mechanics were drafted to HMAS Lonsdale, a shore establishment located at Port Melbourne. Lonsdale became their home for the next six months in that this is where they slept, washed and ironed their uniform clothes and ate most of their meals. Each Monday to Friday, having had breakfast, they would travel to the Melbourne Technical College, later Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) for instruction in electrictiy, and in radio transmission and reception. The travel distance was not far, perhaps 7 kilometres, and for the earlier classes was on the back of an open tray 3 ton truck. Passenger comfort and safety were given low priority. Some later classes had the luxury of travelling by tram.

Not all RMs were billeted at Lonsdale. There were occasions when the population exceeded the capacity for accommodation. On such occasions, some RMs were billeted out in private residences, such as their own home if they lived in Melbourne prior to enlistment.

What happened subsequent to the basic training depended upon two factors. One was the instructors' assessment of each student's potential, and the other was the manpower needs. Most graduates were very keen to be given the training which would lead them to a sea going ship. However, there were a number of shore based manning requirements such as the Naval Transmitting Station at Belconnen Canberra, HMAS Melville in Darwin, HMAS Magnetic in Townsville. So quite a few RMs missed the glamor and excitement of being front line to the enemy. A common war time expression of the day could be appropriate in these circumstances, that of "They also serve who only stand and wait".